

PC.DEL/611/16

6 May 2016

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1099th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 May 2016

**In response to the report by the  
Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina,  
Ambassador Jonathan Moore**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome Ambassador Jonathan Moore to the Permanent Council and thank him for his detailed report on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the principal areas of work of the Mission he heads.

The main task of the OSCE field presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains that of promoting the peaceful coexistence of the different ethnic groups on the basis of the principle of mutual respect and the consolidation of interreligious harmony and tolerance in accordance with the principles of the Dayton Peace Agreement. In this connection, we note with satisfaction the constructive and fruitful character of the Mission's co-operation with the host authorities at various levels in making progress towards these goals.

We attach great significance to continuing the assistance provided by the Mission in overcoming discriminatory practices in the educational sphere and promoting interreligious dialogue, and to preventing hate crimes and supporting the process for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

We consider it appropriate to heighten the attention paid by the Mission to the pressing challenges of today's world – terrorism, extremism, radicalism, organized crime and drug trafficking. These threats are indisputably of a cross-border character and they require co-ordinated efforts on the part of all OSCE missions in the Western Balkans. The field presences have already had a positive experience with horizontal co-operation, and it must be extended to the issues of countering new security challenges, which are a priority for the entire OSCE area.

We support the Mission's project activities in the field of arms control and in helping to ensure proper conditions for the storage and destruction of surplus ammunition and

weapons, in particular, the extrabudgetary Project for the Security Upgrade of Ammunition and Weapons Storage Sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SECUP BiH).

Mr. Chairperson,

For 20 years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina negotiated a complex path to becoming an independent and sovereign State, based on the equal rights and consensus of the three constituent peoples.

Despite certain periods of strengthened domestic political opposition – which are characteristic of many OSCE participating States – the country supports stability, and the intra-Bosnian dialogue has made consistent progress. Bosnia and Herzegovina is taking a calibrated approach to developing good-neighbourly relations with the adjacent Balkan States, as well as a pragmatic route to co-operation with countries outside the region, based on mutual respect for one another's interests. Last year, Bosnia and Herzegovina held the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

All of this testifies to the gradual development of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a responsible State and a fully fledged member of the international community, one that no longer requires such close surveillance. In this connection, we consider it pertinent to emphasize once again that Russia advocates the speedy transfer of full responsibility for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Bosnians themselves and the closure of the Office of the High Representative. We are confident that the remaining unresolved problems of vital importance for the country's future can be effectively resolved by the Bosnians themselves, among other things, by enlisting the outside assistance of the OSCE.

In conclusion, we should like to thank Ambassador Jonathan Moore for his work as Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to wish him and his staff success in the tasks ahead.

Thank you for your attention.